IN THE SPECIFICATION

Please insert the following paragraph at page 1, line 17:

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

According to an example embodiment of the present invention, a method of routing data packets of a plurality of data flows f_1-f_n, in a stream S, carried on a transmission media operating at a first data rate R, through a switching system that is comprised of K parallel switching pathways operating at a second data rate substantially equal to R/K, wherein K is an integer value of two or greater, includes assigning a first data flow f_1 in said stream S to a first switching path comprised of a first data buffer having an output coupled to a corresponding first switching fabric. After said step of assigning a first data flow f_1, data packets of at least said first data flow f_1 are routed to said first switching path. Upon the determination of a first condition, at least some of the data packets of said first data flow f_1 are assigned to a second switching path. The at least some data packets of said first data flow f_1 are routed to said second switching pathway to a second buffer coupled to a second switching fabric.